

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 291738Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 821
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION NATO

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USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, SP
SUBJECT: RETURN OF EXILED CATALAN LEADER

1. IN A MOVE CLEARLY ORCHESTRATED BY PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ, JOSEP TARRADELLAS, PRESIDENT-IN-EXILE OF THE CATALAN "GENERALITAT" (REGIONAL GOVERNMENT), RETURNED TO SPAIN MONDAY AND MET THE SAME EVENING IN MADRID WITH SUAREZ AND (SEPARATELY) WITH INTERIOR MINISTER MARTIN VILLA AND THE CIVIL GOVERNOR OF BARCELONA. AFTERWARDS, IN A PRESS CONFERENCE, TARRADELLAS:
--TERMED THE SUAREZ MEETING HISTORIC, AND ITS TONE CORDIAL, AND ACKNOWLEDGED THE "PATRIOTISM AND AUDACITY"
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OF SUAREZ'S ACTION, WHILE POINTING OUT THAT MUCH REMAINED TO BE DONE AND NO PROMISES HAD BEEN MADE.
--WHILE NOT CLAIMING THAT SUAREZ HAD RECOGNIZED EITHER THE GENERALITAT OR HIS PRESIDENCY OF IT, CLAIMED THAT HIS RECEPTION CONSTITUTED DE FACTO RECOGNITION, AND A VICTORY AS SUCH.
--SPECIFICALLY AFFIRMED THAT, "THE GENERALITAT IS

COMPATIBLE WITH THE SPANISH MONARCHY," AND ACKNOWLEDGED HE WOULD MEET WITH THE KING BEFORE RETURNING TO PARIS. --STATED HE WILL RETURN TO PARIS TODAY OR THURSDAY, NOT GOING TO CATALUNYA UNTIL HE CAN DO SO AS EFFECTIVE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERALITAT.

2. THE RETURN OF TARRADELLAS AS PRESIDENT OF A REVIVED GENERALITAT HAS BEEN A PROMINENT DEMAND OF THE "ASSEMBLY OF PARLIAMENTARIANS" (THE 47 CONGRESSMEN AND 16 SENATORS ELECTED FROM CATALUNYA) WHICH HAS BEEN MEETING IN RECENT DAYS. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, HOWEVER, HIS SUDDEN RETURN AND CORDIAL WELCOME IN MADRID CAUGHT CATALAN LEADERS BY SURPRISE. (ON TUESDAY JOAN REVENTOS, LEADER OF THE PSOE-PSC SOCIALIST COALITION WHICH LED THE VOTING IN CATALUNYA, HURRIED TO MADRID AND MET PRIVATELY WITH TARRADELLAS.)

3. IN A STATEMENT AIRED OVER RADIO BARCELONA, TARRADELLAS, WHO EARLIER HAD STATED THAT HE DID NOT WANT HIS RETURN TO BE THE CAUSE OF ANY DISSENSION WITHIN THE CATALAN LEADERSHIP, CLAIMED (NOT CONVINCINGLY) THAT THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE GENERALITAT BEFORE THE JUNE 15 ELECTIONS HAD BEEN ON TRACK LAST NOVEMBER. BUT, HE CHARGED, SOME CATALAN GROUPS, PARTICULARLY PUJOL'S CDC AND THE COMMUNIST PSUC, DERAILED THE PROCESS BY GOING ALONG WITH A NATIONAL OPPOSITION NEGOTIATING MECHANISM (THE NOW DEFUNCT COMMITTEE OF NINE).

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4. COMMENT: SUAREZ HAS THROWN OFF BALANCE THE IN-PLACE CATALAN LEADERS BY THE SURPRISE MEETING WITH THE EXILE CATALAN FIGURE, WHO REMAINS SOMETHING OF A SYMBOL. TWO PROMINENT CATALANS RUEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED AS MUCH TO CONGEN BARCELONA, AND SOME OF SUAREZ' AIDES LAST NIGHT WERE CHORTLING OVER THIS, SAYING IT WAS AN EARNEST OF HOW SUAREZ WOULD MOVE TO CUT THE GROUND OUT FROM UNDER HIS POLITICAL OPPONENTS BY TAKING THE INITIATIVE IN MATTERS OF REFORM. DESPITE THE CLOUD-CUCKOO-LAND TOUCH TO THE GENERALITAT ISSUE, IT IS A SYMBOL OF CATALAN ASPIRATIONS, AND THE AGING TARRADELLAS HAS BEEN FIGHTING WITH OTHER CATALAN LEADERS TO PRESERVE HIS SYMBOLIC LEADERSHIP. HIS ACCEPTANCE OF THE MONARCHY IS OF COURSE QUITE WELCOME IN THE GOS. STABLER

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